



# JMC COMMAND SAFETY ALERT 2016-02



## Explosive Materials Discovery

Recently, employees at a JMC Government-Owned, Contractor-Operated installation discovered four containers of mercury-5-nitrotetrazole and six detonators filled with lead azide in an active laboratory (estimated Net Explosive Weight - 8 oz). The discovered items are highly sensitive explosive compounds that are usually handled and stored under water and in insulated rubber containers. The materials can explode after a fall of as little as 6 inches or in the presence of a small static discharge. Records indicate that the materials were discovered in a portion of the laboratory that was last used in 1994 and the explosive materials may have been stored there since the mid-1980's. Detailed procedures for handling, transporting and disposing of the discovered materials are being developed and vetted through the Army's Explosive Ordnance Disposal experts.

### **FINDINGS:**

- The installation did not follow their Standing Operating Procedures (SOP)
  - Explosive materials were improperly stored
  - Magazine inventory of hazardous materials not conducted in over 20 years
  - Hazardous and/or explosive materials should NEVER be abandoned in place
  - There was a turnover in personnel without a transfer of information (to include an inventory of laboratory materials)

### **LESSONS LEARNED:**

- All areas within explosives laboratories should be inspected, and inventories verified regularly, in accordance with local SOPs and at LEAST annually
- Clear laboratories and work areas of all hazardous and explosive materials prior to shutting down operations
- Exercise EXTREME caution when dealing with any "discovered" material; especially in a laboratory environment
- Train personnel (annually) on notification and incident response procedures
- Notify your chain of command and contact the U.S. Army Technical Center for Explosives Safety (918-420-8901) if there's ANY question on how to handle explosive items/materials



  
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AMMO STRONG!!